The Big Secret
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The Big Secret

Preface

Chloe has a feeling that there is something weird going on with her mom. She wants to find out what is wrong. With her best friend, Maria, by her side, Chloe embarks on an adventure that leads them to an incredible discovery—and a new friend along the way. They are having a great adventure, exploring new things, and so will they be able to figure things out on their own, or will they tell their parents and accept a little help?

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School Time

Beep! Beep! Beep!

Chloe’s alarm clock blared at her, telling her to wake up. She groggily shut the alarm clock and slowly started to remove the quilt. With no more delays, she slipped out of bed and slithered till she was about to reach for the bathroom door handle, but then something had distracted her. It was her older sister, Samantha’s long and loud yawning and stretching and knuckle cracking.

Chloe quickly got into the bathroom before her sister was able to. Then, by the time she got out, she saw that her sister was sleep walking or something. She didn’t want to get involved so she rushed down the stairs.

“Hey mom, everything okay?” Chloe asked.
“Never better sweetheart,” replied mom. “But you shouldn’t be worrying about me. Focus on your breakfast. The bus is coming in about ten minutes.”

Chloe stared at her mom, still curious, wondering what was really going on. But before she could ask, Samantha came stumbling down the stairs, still looking half-asleep. Just then, her phone rang, and she immediately seemed to snap to attention.

“Mhm... Okay... Sure... No problem, I’ll ask my mom if we can,” she muttered over her phone.
She ended the call and walked over to the kitchen where mom was packing the lunch boxes and asked, “Lily said—" but mom interrupted, “Wait, who's Lily again?” mom asked.

Samantha replied and continued, “Lily, my friend, I mean my best friend. My BFF called me and said that she would love to invite me over to her house for a sleepover tonight after school and that her mom will pick us up.”

The next thing that their mom said surprised both the kids. “Sure, no problem, you can go after school today, I’m 100% alright with that. ’’

“What?!” they both exclaimed at the same time.

“Umm—I —I don’t know what to say, mom. I just cannot believe that you actually said yes, thank you very much. I really appreciate it.”

Then Chloe stopped in the middle of munching her breakfast. She had literally frozen in shock. Chloe then felt more confident in what she had thought of earlier. There really was something wrong with mom. Mom would never let any one of them go to any of their friend’s house, well she would only let them go on any special occasions, not normal ones.

“Oh no!” said mom. “What’s wrong?” Chloe asked.
“The bus driver got delayed and just messaged all parents that he won’t be able to reach in time, he’ll reach in around, let me see, 2 hours, so that means that I have to drop you guys off,” replied mom.

“Fine with me,” said Samantha as she took the last bite of her breakfast. “Wait, but won’t we be late for school then,” Chloe asked, her voice soft as she chewed, worried that the question seemed silly. She wasn’t expecting an answer—but just as she thought no one heard her, Mom spoke up.
“Yes, we would be late, but it would be faster than taking the bus.”
“Mom, you heard, Chloe asked, “but how?”
“Well, kiddo," mom replied, “it’s the power of moms.”

Samantha, meanwhile, seemed uninterested in the conversation. She was too busy texting her friends to notice anything unusual. Chloe glanced over her shoulder at the screen, trying to see what was so interesting.

“Bummer,” Samantha typed in. Samantha then giggled a bit looking at a picture her friend had sent to her. Then she looked around and saw Chloe peeking. Samantha said,

“Chloe, this doesn’t concern you at all. This isn’t even for your age group. Definitely not appropriate for you.” “Yes, but haven’t you noticed that there is something wrong with mom? You know that usually she wouldn’t let you have a sleepover at Lily’s house,” Chloe whispered.

Samantha sighed. “You don’t have to whisper or even speak in a low voice. And honestly it’s fine, just don’t worry about mom. Maybe she’s just happy or well, and in a good mood today, alright. Now come on, we gotta get a move on and get in the car or else we’re going to get late,” Samantha whispered back, putting her backpack on her shoulder and heading towards the car.

She slipped her hands through her jeans pocket and bumped Chloe a little.

Chloe followed and eventually caught up and told Samantha, “You know, maybe you were right after all.”

After Chloe said that, she frowned because she hated being wrong. She then crossed her arms.

“Right about what?” Samantha asked. “Maybe there actually isn’t something wrong with mom,” Chloe replied. “See, I told you not to worry about mom,” Samantha smiled.

Chloe smiled back, and after Samantha turned away looking in a different direction, Chloe frowned again. Deep down inside her heart, within herself, she still thought that there was something wrong with mom.

While mom was driving, Chloe thought that she had enough time to figure out what was wrong with her. So far though, none of Chloe’s calculations had added up. Yet. Unfortunately, they had arrived at school 15 minutes late, and Chloe found out nothing wrong with mom, but she still thought and knew that there was something going on.

Both Chloe and Samantha stepped out of the car and walked through the school doors into the hallway. Chloe knew how strict her teacher was about being late. She was a very smart and disciplined teacher.

As she was walking through the hallway, she saw her best friend trotting and skipping through the hallway toward the bathroom. Surprisingly, not looking stressed at all. She looked calm, relaxed and quite cool. Not that she didn't always. It's just that their teacher piled up a bunch of class work and homework which was very stressful and hard to do.

She walked over to her friend and told her that she was completely concerned about her mom and that she was acting weirdly and strangely.

“Let it pass, see a few more days, and check on her again and then we’ll see how it goes,” her friend, Maria, told her.
Chloe followed her friend’s great, awesome, rightful, and correct advice. “So what brings you into the bathroom?” Chloe asked.
They then started chatting.“Guess what, you won’t believe this, I was literally able to sneak out of the classroom twice without the teacher noticing me in the same period,” Maria said to Chloe.
“Wait, but how’d you do that, our teacher would never let any student out of her sight,” Chloe replied.

“That’s because she’s sick today and she’s absent, and you won’t get in detention because of being late. Don’t you think if she was here, I would literally be making you rush to class right now,” Maria said.

“Yes,” Chloe said and they both chatted and chuckled together on their way back to class.

Investigation

Ding! Ding! Ding!

The school bell rang for recess, and every student rushed out of their seats, eager to head outside. But the supply teacher immediately shouted at them to come back in. She scolded the class and punished everyone by making them stay inside for half of recess, just because a few of the boys had misbehaved. Half the class, including the ones who behaved well, had to stay in—unfairly punished. Nobody had ever told Chloe that supply teachers could be this strict.

Finally, when they did get to go out for recess, Maria got to the first swing and saved the one beside it for her best friend, Chloe.
“It seems like my mom is hiding something from me. Things just don’t seem right,” Chloe said, barely swinging on her swing.

“Well then, if I can’t tell you to figure it out later, then it’s definitely time for an investigation,” Maria said.
“Right, just like the television show we watch, 'The InBESTigators', and the book we read last week, 'Look for clues with the Clues Crew!'" Chloe exclaimed, gasping.
“Wait, that’s it Chloe! You’re a genius!” Maria said as she threw her arms around Chloe giving her a big hug hopping off the swing.

“Thanks, but what did I do? What happened? What’s going on?” Chloe asked a bunch of questions as she hugged Maria back.

After the hug, they both got back on their swings. But before Maria could answer, one of the bullies pushed Chloe off the swing on purpose, eager to claim it for himself. Chloe fell and smacked her face against the concrete. She burst into tears.

The bullies didn’t care. They swung right onto the swing, acting like nothing had happened.

“ What was that for?!” Maria yelled. Her face was all fired up. There was nothing much she could’ve done about it but to tell the teacher and bring her to the nurse’s office. “It’s not my fault she’s such a crybaby,” the two bullies teased.

“She’s only seven years old, what do you possibly expect from her,” Maria said, defending Chloe, then rolled her eyes.

They, of course, didn’t seem to be understanding anything.

At the nurse’s office, Maria visited Chloe, trying to comfort her.

“Here, maybe if we could talk about your mom’s investigation, then that might perhaps take your mind off that thingy,” Maria said pointing towards where Chloe had gotten hurt.

“You’re probably right, so what did you mean by 'that’s it Chloe'? Did you figure it out or something?” Chloe asked.

“Yes, I mean sort of. You know how you said the book’s title 'Look for clues with the Clues Crew,' right?” Maria started.

“Well yeah, what about it?” Chloe asked.

“We have to look for clues and I’ll be taking down notes, alright?” Maria confirmed with Chloe.

“Great idea, wonderfully thought of, why didn’t we think of that before?” Chloe exclaimed. “Let’s get started straight away, no time to waste,” Chloe added.
“Wait, hold on, slow down, tell me everything every single detail,” Maria said, getting her pen ready, scribbling and testing whether the pen works or not. It did work. Then they got started.
“Okay, so let’s see what I know so far. Mom heard me when I spoke super-duper low. She even let Samantha go for a sleepover at her friend’s house. And that’s all I know so far,” Chloe said as Maria took down notes on a blank sheet of paper with a clipboard in her hands which the sheet of paper was on.

“We’re so close, what are we missing?” Maria thought.
“It’s all on edge,” Chloe spoke finally after two whole minutes of silence.

Just then the school’s phone rang. “I can pick it up."

I can pick it up.” the kids raised and waved their hands up high and shouted, “I can pick it up.” Then the teacher walked up to the phone and ruined all the fun out of it. “How about I pick it up,” said the supply teacher and picked up the phone. “Aww!” All the kids moaned and groaned.

“Chloe you’re leaving,” the teacher called out to Chloe.

“Now?” Chloe asked.

“Yes, now,” the teacher said in a more stricter voice.

“Bye,” both Maria and Chloe said to each other at the same exact time.

“I’ll try to figure out more about my mom today,” Chloe said to Maria.

Maria gave Chloe a thumbs up.

Chloe got packed up and ready to leave.” I can see my car, I’m going to leave for sure now, bye Mrs.” Chloe waved goodbye to her supply teacher as she stepped right into the car.

“How was school today, children?” Mom asked.

“Normal,” replied Samantha who was still looking down at her phone.

“It was fine, I guess,” replied Chloe.

“Oh, by the way Chloe, how’s your face and arm doing, feeling better now?” mom asked.

“What are you possibly talking about mom?”

“You know how you got hurt after you fell off the swing in school,” mom said.
“How do you know that mom?” Chloe said, feeling creeped out.

“Oh, after you got hurt and went to the nurse’s office, the nurse went to the main office and told me what happened. That’s why I picked you guys up early from school today,” said mom.
“Right, duh, yeah I’m-I’m feeling pretty much better now, thanks for asking mom,” Chloe said, feeling much better, calm and relieved.
“Hey, can you look after my phone for me while I go check out that new pizza place that just opened nearby, will you Chloe? Just for a couple of minutes?” said mom as she parked the car.
“Sure thing mom,” Chloe said.

As soon as mom handed Chloe the phone, the first thing that was opened was a picture of a flower.

It was a daisy—unusual, not like the others. At first, Chloe completely ignored it, but as time passed, it started to capture her attention. Just then, her mom entered the car, leaving Chloe no time to analyze it further.“ Thank you so much for taking such good care of my phone, Chloe,” mom said.
“No problem, anytime, but you don’t have to thank me anyways,” Chloe replied as she hurried to remove the page where the flower was on.

When they reached home, their mom offered them some homemade cake.
“Yum,” Samantha said as she picked up the knife and spoon. She was ready to dive into anything that mom made for them.

“It was very thoughtful of you mom, but um no thanks, I’m not really hungry at the moment, no offence. Well, not that I’m saying your food isn’t good, it’s just that I'm um….I'm not really hungry,” Chloe said shifting the plate away from her, hoping that mom wouldn’t be mad at Chloe for not eating her food.

“Are you sure you’re not hungry? You know, once you take a bite you’ll probably want to eat more because of how good it tastes,” mom replied, glancing at Chloe.

“Mom’s absolutely right, it does taste very delicious, Chloe,” Samantha said, taking mom’s side.

“See,” mom said, "even your sister agrees with me, oh just take a bite, just one, just for me and Samantha, come on make us both happy.”

“Fine, I’ll take just one bite to make you and mom happy,” Chloe said, taking a bite of her mom’s cake.

“Mmm, pretty good enough,” Chloe said.

“Good enough? I wanted you to enjoy it fully though,” mom replied.

“Oh, sorry mom, it was very good, and surprisingly more awesome and tastier than my favorite dish,” Chloe said admiring it.

“See, I told you that once you have a bite of my cake you’ll start to love it and want more of it,” mom replied.

“Oh, I’d love to sit and chitchat, but Lily just texted me, telling me to arrive at her house at six. She just keeps on texting trying to remind me ever since I told her the good news that you, mom, let me go to her house for a sleepover today." Samantha smiled. "I can easily understand why she is so excited, because tonight is going to be the most best night of our lives, and also because we haven’t been to a sleepover together since well, I don’t think that I really exactly remember, like in ages or so,” Samantha said, took her sleeping bag, and waved goodbye as she tied her shoelaces tight.

Mom’s phone vibrated right after Samantha left. “Umm, I uh, I have to take this call, like right now, if you’ll please excuse me,” said mom as she walked away down the hall sway keeping her phone’s screen tightly placed on her chest so no one would see who the phone call was from.

She turned around in every single direction to check to make sure if anyone (Chloe) was looking at her phone screen. Mom had been very secretive about her phone calls lately.
Chloe was determined to know who that phone call was from and why her mom was so secretive about it. Just then mom entered the dining room. “You okay, hon?” mom asked, looking at Chloe in the eyes.
“Mhm, yeah, totally, totally fine,” Chloe replied looking down.

“Look me straight in the eyes and tell me, are you sure that you’re okay? You’ve been so off edge lately, I just want to make sure that you’re alright, and besides I’m your mom, it’s my responsibility to take care of you,” mom said to Chloe.
“I know mom, and I truly do love you, but you have stop worrying about me, I’m going to be fine, I think I’m quite old enough to take care of myself now, and I’m so glad that you’re feeling for me, but I know that I’m going to be okay. More than okay, so you have to stop worrying about me,” said Chloe.
“You sure? You’re only seven years old,” mom replied, sighing and chuckling softly at the same time, wrapping her arms tightly around Chloe.

Chloe tried to smile very hard because she wasn't feeling like smiling then that much, but then suddenly something happened.

Something was definitely wrong.

"Oh no, is it what I think it is. No, it can't possibly be true! There's got to have been some sort of misunderstanding happening here. There's got to have been some logical explanation behind all this," Chloe whispered silently to herself.

Her heart sank. She couldn't believe it. She was starting to understand what this all meant. Or at least, she thought she did. Her heart raced, pounding in her chest.

After Mom tucked Chloe into bed and left the room, Chloe fell into a restless sleep, haunted by nightmares about the situation. She couldn't shake the feeling, and the sleep she did get was disturbed—leaving her exhausted the next morning.

Figured It Out

Ding-dong!

“I’ll get it mom!” Chloe yelled across the empty hallway. Her voice echoed through the hallway because of how silent it was.

Chloe opened the door, and guess who it was! It was….

Samantha!

“Well, well, well, look who’s back, Samantha. Did you two have fun, you and Lily, at the sleepover?” Chloe asked.

"Yep, we had a blast!” Samantha replied and was so eager to tell them all about it. She was quite surprised to see that even though Chloe and mom were all so busy, they were pretty interested in listening to her long story about her sleepover with Lily.

“Well, I guess I better be heading out to Maria’s house. Also, besides, there hasn’t been one day where we haven’t been receiving any homework, and especially on Friday we receive the most homework,” Chloe said as she left out the front door. Every

afternoon on Saturdays she would go to Maria’s place so they could do their homework together, and today, this Saturday wouldn't be any different than other Saturdays.
She walked and walked till she finally reached Maria's front door. It only took like five minutes. Maria and Chloe’s houses were very nearby.
Maria’s mom was incredibly kind—and no one ever said Chloe’s mom wasn’t. Chloe took a deep breath in and knocked on the door. Not that she was afraid to enter inside or anything.

Knock, knock, knock!

Someone opened the door a few seconds later. Chloe exhaled. It was Maria’s mom. “Oh, hi, nice to meet you, Maria was expecting you today, you must be Chloe, and I’m Maria’s mom, my name is Alison, oh and by the way, Maria always talks about you, she never stops mentioning your name, literally, I’m not kidding or joking around here. I’m not messing around with you. She seriously never stops telling me all about you and what such a great friend you are,” said Alison. “Well, that’s nice to hear,” Chloe told Maria’s mom. All that just proves that Alison was very, very nice.

“Please, do come inside, I’d really appreciate it if you would,” said Alison.
Then, Chloe took off her crocs on the “Welcome” mat and stepped right into the house.
“Chloe, you’re here!” Maria said, getting off the couch and running towards Chloe, and Maria squeezed Chloe tight after she reached her. Chloe was super-duper squished.

“Yeah, of course I’m here, you wouldn’t think that I’d forget, well especially not today,” Chloe replied, hugging Maria back.
“Okay, well, let’s go up to my room,” Maria said.
They both took a couple steps up the stairs. Maria, excited as ever, raced ahead, taking the steps two at a time. Chloe followed, though a voice called out from behind. “Hey, Chloe, won’t you be hungry walking all the way over here? I know it’s just five minutes, but it’s rude not to offer you something,” Maria’s mom called.

“Yeah, actually I’m starving,” Chloe said.
Maria added, “I’m a bit hungry too now. Oooh, by the way Chloe, my mom makes the best spaghetti with meatballs. You’ll love it, trust me.”

“Well, I believe you, Maria, I’d never doubt you,” Chloe chuckled. Maria looked at Chloe smiling back at her.
A few minutes later, Maria’s mom asked, “And may I offer you girls something to drink?”
“I’m good mom, I’m full now,” Maria said as she gave the dish to her mom.
“What about you Chloe?” Alison asked.
“Sure, I guess I’ll just have a glass of apple juice please,” Chloe said.
“You sure you don’t want to have anything else?” Alison asked. “Anything else from the fridge,” Alison asked again for the second time.
“No, no, no, I don’t want you to be going through all this trouble just for me,” Chloe told Alison.
“No, honestly, darling, don’t worry about me, I really don’t mind it at all, help yourself to whatever you want from the fridge,” Alison replied.
“Okay, well, in that case, I'd rather have some refreshing ice tea or a lemonade,” Chloe said.
“I’ll get both for you, no worries and no big deal,” Alison replied as she hurried to prepare the ingredients for the two drinks.
Chloe quickly gulped both the drinks in a second and the next moment both the girls held hands and rushed upstairs together into Maria’s room.

As soon as Chloe and Maria opened up their notebooks, Chloe said, “Maria, I need to tell you something in private, it’s about my mom.” After that, she whispered something in her ear. “Magic.”

That was the only word that Chloe whispered into Maria's ear. "No, tha-that's not possible, magic isn't real, it doesn't even exist," Maria said.

"Yes, well, I thought so too, but I figured out that magic is real. I mean, well if you think about it logically enough, it'd all make perfect sense," Chloe said, explaining the whole thing to Maria.

Alison was standing there listening to the girls the whole entire time, and guess what! They didn't even notice that she was there.

"Really girls, magic? You've got to be kidding me right now," Alison said, putting her hand to her hips.

"Hey there mom, how's it going?" Maria asked her mom, nervously smiling.

(Fact about Maria: Whenever she nervously smiles, you can tell that she's clearly trying to hide something from someone.)

Alison scoffed and left the room. Maria grabbed her phone, and Chloe’s eyes lingered for a moment. It wasn’t jealousy—well, maybe a little. Chloe had always wanted a phone, and she couldn’t help but think Maria was lucky to have one.

So anyways, she grabbed her phone from her backpack and called out to her mom, “Wait a second, mom, can I—" but she stopped talking.

“Why did you stop….talking?” Chloe asked Maria in such a way because she had realized that Maria’s mom had disappeared.

“Do you think that maybe your mom went down the stairs that quickly?” Chloe asked, clenching up her fists tightly.

“I don’t think so, if she even went down that quick, her slippers should’ve made a sound because our steps are made out of wood,” Maria answered. She adjusted her bracelets accordingly to her arm.

“Sit down, we need to talk.” Both the girls sat on the bed beside one another.

“Talk about what?” Chloe questioned.

They talked and talked until they finally reached the end. They wrapped up their sentences with, “I think that you’re right, magic is real, it does exist, and I don’t think that my mom rushed down the stairs,” Maria spoke softly to Chloe.

“What are you talking about? Do I think I know what you're thinking?” Chloe asked, feeling quite shocked and surprised.

“Yep, you definitely read my mind, I’m pretty sure that my mom teleported,” replied Maria.

Oh no! Two people knew about magic. In fact, well in this case, four people. Including Maria and Chloe. The two girls were just making sure that the magic was in good hands. They didn’t want the magic to be falling into the wrong ones. They rushed down the stairs huffing and puffing.

"Done studying so fast?” Alison asked as she put the dishes in the dishwasher.

Her braid was stunning. You could tell by the look on Chloe’s face of how much she loved and admired Alison’s braid.

“How did you manage to make that braid? It must have been tough work,” Chloe finally admitted to Maria’s mom, looking at it.

“Oh, this braid was very hard to make, but believe me, a bit of practice would really help. I actually should be thanking my grandma, because she’s the one who taught me how to make it back in the days when I used to be younger." She smiled. "Speaking of grandma, Maria, don’t forget to clean the house today, because your grandma will be coming to visit us today at exactly four o’clock, and you do know how punctual she is and she’d never ever be late,” Alison said.

“Right. Chloe, my grandma has a poodle and two white colored cats,” Maria replied.

Chloe was going to share a poem that she wrote about animals a week ago, but Maria just tugged Chloe’s hand so she wasn’t able to recite the poem she had written. Maria challenged Chloe to a race and she actually accepted. So, they raced each other all the way to Alison’s room. Maria won, because Chloe’s a little slower than her.

“What are we doing in your mom’s room?” Chloe asked, whispering, so that Alison wouldn’t hear.

“We’ve got to figure out where my mom keeps all the magical supplies,” Maria said whispering back to Chloe. So as told by Maria, the girls dug through all the old, rusty, dirty and clean boxes.

“Ugh, how could your mom get her room so unorganized, even my room is more neat, clean and organized than this,” Chloe replied, feeling disgusted.

“There’s no way we can find something magical in here.” Maria ignored Chloe and kept searching for things that were magic related.

Until finally, Maria came upon a box labeled, “Top secret, magic stuff.” It was written in cursive.

“Hmmm, I expected it to be fancier than that,” Maria thought. She opened up the plastic cover that was covering up the lid of the box. Then, she carefully opened up the lid, and you wouldn't believe what sort of things she found.

“Hey Chloe, psst, Chloe, come over here as soon as possible. I found something.”

“What is that red button? What do you think it does?” Chloe asked as she pressed it.
“No, Chloe don’t—” but it was too late, Chloe had already pressed it.

Soon enough, there was a gigantic oval on the wall. It had all sorts of pastel colors swirling inside, pink, purple, many shades of blue, and so on. It was a secret portal.

“Let’s go inside and find out,” Chloe said.
“Chloe, stop! Chloe don’t go in, I-I would never forgive myself if something bad happened to you.”
Chloe wasn’t listening or paying attention to Maria at this point.

Slowly, she put one hand on the portal, afterwards a foot in and stepped right through the portal. In a flash, even a blink of an eye, she had vanished. Not even a single part of her body was showing.
“Where’d you go?!” Maria asked, panicking. Maria then knew what she had to do. She packed all the materials and put them back in the orange-colored box again. Maria took a deep breath and walked into the portal.

“ Oh Chloe, there you are, I was worried sick about you! Is everything okay?” Maria asked, giving Chloe a big hug that she had never given her before.

“Everything’s just perfectly fine, no need to ask,” Chloe replied, hugging Maria back as tight as she could. Chloe was so glad to see that Maria came in through the portal to join her. Maria sighed a sigh of relief as she put her hand on her chest.

A Place Full of Wonder

Buzz, buzz, buzz!

A bunch of bees were swarming around flowers. “Hey, look Maria, I recognize that flower. It’s the daisy, the exact one which was on my mom’s phone,” Chloe said, walking toward it.
She knelt down, plucking the flower. As she spun it between her fingers, the sweet fragrance filled the air, a delightful scent that made the moment even more magical.

Just then, out of nowhere (from beneath the daisies), sprung out a tiny creature, like, about the size of a mouse. That startled both Maria and Chloe.

Then, the tiny creature began talking to them. “Hi, didn’t mean to startle you there, I am truly sorry about that. My name is Mike. Well, my full name is Michael, but people just call me Mike,” the little voice said, introducing himself.

His voice sounded like a squeak, but the girls seemed to understand what he was saying. Mike looked like a skinny dude with an adorable hat and a wristband around his wrist.

“So Michael, what exactly are you?” Chloe asked the little creature, leaning closer so she could hear him better. Maria did the same.

“First of all, don’t call me Michael, call me Mike, and secondly, I’m what people call, “The Guardian of the Daisies,” Mike replied.

“Wait, people?” Maria questioned.

“Come on, I’ll explain on the way!” Mike said eagerly as he walked with his small legs. It was hard for the girls to keep up with him.

Even Maria was having trouble catching up with him although she is fast. After they had finally reached, Maria and Chloe stopped and caught their breath. They looked up, and both of the girls' jaws dropped. The view was awesome.

“Here we are, Magical Mystic Land!” Mike boomed. “I can’t wait to show you guys. You’re going to love it!” And then they took off. Well, Mike did.

“Here we go again,” Maria mumbled to Chloe and took off behind Mike.

Chloe left behind her. It became a train. From shortest to taller to tallest! Mike was the shortest, Maria was taller, and Chloe was the tallest.

There were a lot of creatures that looked just like Mike. Except the girl creatures had ponytails coming out of each end.

“You see, each one of us here has a job to do. I protect the flowers, my friend Kristie builds equipment to help protect us from being harmed, and blah, blah, blah, so on, you get the idea,” Mike blabbed. “Only I wish you got to see it in action, while you’re still here.”

“Help! Help!” a muffled voice yelled from down below somewhere. It’s like Mike’s wish came true, for Chloe and Maria to see something in person.

“Where’s the sound coming from?” Chloe asked Mike.

“I don’t know,” Mike replied, grinning because he knew Kristie would figure something out.

Kristie then popped her head up with a big machine. It was to detect where the voice was coming from. She blew soft air and a twinkle came from her mouth onto the machine.

“That must’ve been the magic,” the girls both thought at the same time. Kristie detected where the muffled voice was coming from. Well, the machine did. It was coming from underneath a bunch of rocks. Kristie lifted some of the rocks, and a little girl figure came out from beneath.

“Thank you so much, Kristie, you’re such a lifesaver,” said the girl who was struggling to get her feet unstuck from between the rocks. She eventually got her feet out.

“That… was…ama-zing!” said the girls.

“You know what’s going to be even more amazing? That tower,” Mike told them.

The tower was so tall it felt like it was going to fall down on everyone in Magical Mystic Land. Besides the tower, there was something even more incredible. It was a ginormous castle! They were both connected to each other. “Is that tower really connected to that castle, or is the tower too close to the castle that it looks connected?” Maria asked.
“They are connected together,” Mike answered with a nod. Maria then realized that Chloe was gone.
“Hey, Mike, did you realize that Chloe is gone? Where do you think she went?”
Mike dashed up the stairs of the tower. Maria zoomed up behind him without questioning him or even saying a word. Then, they found Chloe staring at an old portrait.
“Chloe, you can’t keep running off like that, it’s very hard to keep up with you,” Maria said, panting.
“Sorry, hey Mike, is that you, when you were younger?” Chloe asked, pointing to the portrait.

“Yes, that was me, when I was a baby, and those were my parents, the ones who were holding me in their arms,” Mike answered, almost crying. His parents were dead by now. Maria and Chloe couldn’t help feeling really sad and bad for Mike. They couldn’t even imagine what it would be like to live without their parents. They wanted him to feel better and cheer up.

“So Mike, you said that you’d explain everything to me on the way, but you didn’t, you forgot about it,” Maria told him.

“Oh, I didn’t forget, I’d never forget about something that important, I just thought I should tell you while we eat.”

“Eat where?”

“Follow me.” And there he went running off again.

“Wait up!” Maria yelled. They then found themselves at a fancy restaurant.

Up high on the ceiling was a big, long chandelier. “What is this place?” Chloe asked, patting the tables as they walked past them.

“This is the most famous and popular restaurant in Magical Mystic Land,” said Mike. He sat down on the fanciest chair there. “I want to sit down before all the good seats are taken. Have a seat.”

There was just one slight problem though. The seats were all tiny, because everybody in Magical Mystic Land was tiny. There was no other option but for them to stand.

“Order whatsoever you like from the menu,” Mike told them.
“I’m not mistaken, am I? I thought that this place should’ve been packed by now because you said that this was the most popular restaurant,” Chloe said, all confused.
Mike started laughing hard. Chloe and Maria weren’t sure why.
“Oh silly, this is a popular restaurant, but no one’s coming right now because humans are not very common here,” Mike said.
“I’m going to explain every single detail to you both.”
The food was making its way to the table. “Here you go,” said the small creature with the mustache as he handed out the plates.

“Thank you,” Mike said to him. “So, as I was going to be saying, long long before you, there was a lady, who got lost in the woods, and she couldn’t find her way back home. She looked helpless. I then saw her and popped out from under the daisies. She got startled, just like you guys did when you first saw me. The lady’s name was Sara by the way, for your information. Sara was the first person to ever visit Magical Mystic Land at the time. She greeted

me and I showed her around. Everything you see and name here is magical. Even the daisies. All the humans that came here are either here by themselves, or in a group of two, and if they come in a bad sense, then Kristie and the others will dump that being in “The Horrible Piece”. No one would dare to enter there.”

Afterwards, the three of them silently walked out from the restaurant. They all rusted the bits of food that may have dropped on their clothes while they were eating. Chloe and Maria were still super shocked about what Mike had told them.

Chloe spoke shyly a couple minutes later. “I really want to continue exploring around the places we haven’t. I’m sure Maria’s mom wouldn't mind.” Mike and Maria agreed, and they both said to Chloe that she could lead the way. And she did.

Several minutes had passed as Mike yawned pretty loud for someone that small of a size. Everyone was so tired. They wanted a break.

“I think we’ve explored enough for the day, we better head back home,” Maria said, giving a look to Chloe.

Mike responded by saying goodbye. He then saw them disappearing through the portal.

The last thing that Chloe and Maria saw before they walked back through the portal was Mike dropping a tear that rolled down from his cheek to the floor. The girls understood why. After they both left, Mike had no company or friends to be with. Although before they left, the last thing they promised Mike was that they would return. They started shivering as soon as they entered the house's room. It was way much colder in the room than in Magical Mystic Land. Maria's mom had bursted into the room with a shout.

"Where were you?! I searched the whole entire house for you, kids! Thank goodness you are alright. Where'd you guys go anyway?"

Chloe saw Maria's face go from tan to hot pink.

Maria started sweating from the top of her forehead to her toes.

They both froze and didn't say a word. There was no way that they were going to be able to explain where they had been all along.

That's exactly why Chloe had to jump in and make a simple statement. "Ummm, we just went on a walk. A very very long walk."

"Did you go on a trail, a very long one? Alison asked.

"No, we didn't, just a regular chitchat walk."

“Then why do you have stains on your clothes? I certainly don’t remember you having stains on your clothes when you entered the house.”

Oh boy, they were caught. For real this time.

Chloe and Maria both ran out of excuses to make. Luckily, the doorbell rang, so Alison had to go get it.

They were saved once more. The next time they would be caught, who knows how much trouble they would get into. There was no telling who was at the door. Maria’s mom peered out through the window to see who it was. It was Maria’s grandma.

“Clean the house,” Alison mouthed to Maria.

“Really, now, when I am exhausted?” Maria asked. Alison glared at Maria.

“Fii-iiiine,” Maria groaned. “‘I’ll clean up the house.”

She grabbed the broom from the kitchen and started sweeping. Chloe helped by holding up the dust pan for Maria. Alison let Maria’s grandma in and avoided the places where Maria was still sweeping.

After all that brooming, the girls certainly deserved a break. They both sat down on the couch where the two ladies were sitting talking about their day. “Here’s my favorite child,” Maria’s grandma said, smiling as she chubbed Maria’s cheek.

Chloe cleared her throat and was about to say something, but then she saw the poodle and the cats, and that made her forget all about what she was going to say. Chloe had a lot of love for animals.

“Those are absolutely ADORABLE.” It was like she understood animals. She tried to act like that, but in reality, she couldn’t.

Chloe bent down and gently played with the animals. “What are they all named?” Chloe asked the owner which was Maria’s grandma. “The poodle is named Rainbow because one of the colors in the rainbow is pink, and Rainbow’s fur is pink, get it? I know it doesn’t make sense, but do you get it?” The grandma giggled.

“Got it.” Chloe smiled.

“Any who, take any cat because they are the same color, one of them is named Cotton and the other is named Fluffy.”

“Nice names I have to admit.” Chloe looked up at the clock. It was almost time to leave. “Goodbye all, I will miss you,” said Chloe.
“Not forever,” Maria answered, “we'll see each other at school the day after tomorrow.”

Chloe left after a while, and as soon as she arrived back home, she told her mom that she had loads of fun. ”Mom, I have to tell you something”, Chloe said, smiling warmly. About magic. Maria and I found out. You know, Mark and Magical Mystic Land, and all that stuff.” Mom looked blank and confused like she had no idea what Chloe was talking about, but in the next few seconds she replied that, “Oh Chloe, I knew you girls were smart enough to figure it out, and I’m really really really sorry that I didn’t tell you about magic. I regret it now, but I am glad you found out.” Chloe sniffled and hugged her mom saying, “It’s okay.” Perhaps Maria also told her mom the same exact thing, telling her about the magic and everything Chloe had told her mom. They together decided that they were going to Maria’s house. Chloe and her mom quickly got dressed, but

Samantha did not. Poor Samantha didn’t want to go to Maria’s house, but she was forced to because Chloe and mom were. “Hi Chloe!” Maria exclaimed loudly as soon as they arrived. “What brings you here?” “I am glad you asked”, Chloe said taking her shoes off entering the house. “We’re going to Magical Mystic Land. I believe you told your mom too.” Maria nodded. Samantha did not understand what they were talking about, but she did understand when they went there. “Magic is real! I can’t believe it!” Samantha was extremely impressed and shocked after learning magic, but she also did have a bunch of fun. The rest of them came home from the place full of wonder and had a great day.